

REMARKS

Claims 1-28, 53 and 54 remain in this application.

The Examiner has objected to Claims 7-15 and 20-24.

Antecedent support for the amendments to the claims is found in the figures. For instance, figure 2 shows a first and second switching element, each of which are connected to the plurality of disk elements and the plurality of network elements.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the discussion, and the comments in the "Response to Arguments" section of the Office Action concerning introducing particular switch structure to the switch fabric.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-6, 16-19, 25-28, 53 and 54 as being unpatentable over Lee.

Referring to Lee, there is taught an ethernet switch 170 that connects the appliance to a network switch. See column 5, lines 20-25. There is also taught a conventional FC switch 180. The FC switch 180 is a SAN network switch that connects to the appliance 100. See column 5, lines 60-64. None of these switches taught by Lee meet the limitation, or really have anything at all to do with the limitation in amended Claim 1 of a switching fabric having a first

switching element and a second switching element each of which are connected to each of the D disk elements to route requests to a corresponding disk element based on the file system requests ID . . . N network elements each of which is connected to each of the switching elements of the switching fabric. Accordingly, Claim 1 is patentable over Lee.

Claims 2-6 are dependent to parent Claim 1 and are patentable for the reasons Claim 1 is patentable.

Claim 16 is patentable for the reasons Claim 1 is patentable. Claims 17-19 are dependent to parent Claim 16 and are patentable for the reasons Claim 16 is patentable.

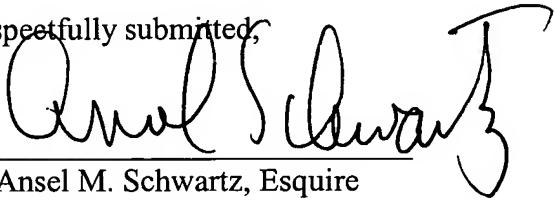
Claims 25-27 are patentable for the reasons Claim 1 is patentable. Claim 28 is dependent to parent Claim 27 and is patentable for the reasons Claim 27 is patentable. Claim 53 is patentable for the reasons Claim 1 is patentable. Claim 54 is dependent to parent Claim 53 and is patentable for the reasons Claim 53 is patentable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejections and objections to this application be reconsidered and withdrawn, and Claims 1-28, 53 and 54, now in this application be allowed.

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